

## We've sent your bags on ahead (Part 2)

We're home, the bag aren't. Getting home from Africa is not nearly as easy as getting to Africa, partly because the time change is easier to handle heading east than west, partly because you're a bit tired, and partly because Lufthansa decides on a sudden walkout that leaves you scrambling for flights home. Add to that your bags not showing up...

It was one of those epic-long travel "days." It started in Cape Town at 8am on Monday (we got to sleep in because our 9:25am flight had been cancelled), and ended at home around 9:30 Tuesday. Add 10 hours to that "day" for the difference in time and you've got, I think, 47 hours of which I might have slept 4. The original plan was to have the return broken up by an overnight stay in Munich, allowing all "daytime" flights on the return. Heavenly. But that was not to be. Instead of a 9:25am flight to Munich, followed by a 9:40am flight the next morning to New York, we had a 6pm flight to Istanbul, landing there at 5am, followed in just over two hours by a 7:40am flight to Paris, 2.5 hour layover before a 12:40pm flight to Chicago, then two hours after that a flight to SFO.

Thankfully United was wonderful coming up with alternative routing, even though it had been Lufthansa causing the problem. Booking the tickets with United instead of Lufthansa was one of my smarter ideas, since I have enough status with United that I never have to wait on the phone more than 2 minutes and they've done a great job getting me where I need to go when something screwy has come up. But... not so sure I want to fly Turkish Airlines again. At least, not with bags. I should have recognized an issue when they accidentally printed two routing stickers for one bag, and the bag tags listed ORD (Chicago) as the final destination, not SFO. The destination tag shouldn't have really been an issue though, since you have to pick up your luggage at ORD anyway when you clear customs. Still, things didn't feel quite right.

At Paris, we discovered just how not-right things might be, as we were called up to one of their agents before being allowed to board the plane, questioning how many bags we had, if any. Some sort of discrepancy because they didn't have records for what we were traveling with. We ended up being the last people on our plane, but obviously our luggage didn't make it.

More soon. But at least I'm home, ready to ride tomorrow morning. --Mike--